

Dear Honorable members of Planning & Development,

As the Deputy Assessor in the Town of Manchester, I support HB 5183 before you and encourage you to support this bill's passage. This is a bill would prevent attorneys from accepting assessment appeal work based on a contingency fee.

Appeals are often brought solely because the taxpayer typically gets some sort of reduction for being the "sweaky wheel" even when their assessment is perfectly sound and justified. If they are paying their attorney and tax rep based on a contingent fee, this taxpayer does not even pay anything to file the appeal. If the amount of money the attorney or tax rep is paid is ultimately contingent on the reduction they obtain in a settlement, their objectivity is vastly compromised.

This bill will end this practice and it will benefit all towns as good assessments will be kept in place and taxpayers will be paying their fair and equitable taxes. The current practice only encourages more frivolous appeals and significantly more aggressive appeals where the reps are seeking a lower value than they otherwise would because they are ultimately have an large financial incentive to do so. This practice is counterproductive to the goal of maintaining equitable assessment levels.

Please pass bill HB 5183 so this largely unethical appeals practice comes to a stop in our state.

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